

The old dowager empress continues, however, to be China's real General Ma.

A tuberosity by any other name would smell as sweet and probably cost just as much.

There are said to be more suicides on Monday than on any other day. Monday is wash day.

Lord Kitchener points with pride to the fact that it took a tunnel to put him down and out.

A London authority says that shyness is due simply to a wrong mental angle. Obtuse or acute?

Another Vanderbilt girl has been born, and thus a rosy outlook is provided for some future duke.

If the Sunday proposal isn't binding a great many men will no doubt be sorry the fact wasn't announced before.

There is at last one new thing under the sun; the billposters and distributors have discovered "real art" in billboards.

J. M. Barrie, the English author and playwright, has an income of \$35,000 a year. Yet they say he is inclined to be taciturn.

Bohemia has declared American beer to be the best in the world. Here's another "peril" to keep Europe awake o' nights.

J. C. Hummel of Hamburg, Pa., has whooping cough, at the age of 87. This is carrying the second childhood business to extremes.

Oom Paul is so completely merged in oblivion that even the comparison of Colombian soldiers with Boers does not move him to reply.

Dreyfuss talks of reopening his case. The captain should understand that he struck twelve some time ago, and that no more need be said.

Russia and Japan have agreed that there is enough good looking in fat old China for two, and there is no use in musing up the scenery.

When a woman can't make her husband stop smoking a pipe because it ruins the curtains the consolation she has is that it is good for the rubber plant.

The woman who puts her hat on before the play is finished is just about on a par with the chap who goes out between the acts to disguise his breath.

The Chicago Janitresses' union is half tickled to death because it has won the right to scrub. This is something that most women dodge when they can.

We are told not to worry over the small things of life, yet how can one help doing so when a flea gets to work on one in the presence of a stranger.

There will be a total eclipse of the sun Aug. 30 next year, and the astronomers of Spain have forgivably invited those of this country to come there and look at it.

First lessons in the school of journalism should be the writing of letters about the "expected" war between Japan and Russia. That reads like good stuff for beginners.

Mrs. Lena Birse wants a divorce because, forsooth, her George can't play cards. Yet many there be that seek separation because their Georges can play. Again we ask, where do we get off?

The route of Paul Revere's famous ride is now obscured by a trolley road. It is evident that the great patriot was not sufficiently long-headed to warn the Colonials of all the calamities that were coming.

Cleveland physicians are disappointed because they failed to restore a dead man sufficiently to make him live long enough to undergo an operation that might have been performed if he had not died.

The Seattle woman who loved a woman who was masquerading as a man, and attempted suicide when she could not marry her, has proven the truth of the saying that "The clothes do not make the man."

A popular subscription will be started to purchase a monument for the grave of a Georgia man whose claim to fame and gratitude rests in the fact that he wrote 4,000 poems and never published one of them.

The gentleman who had a new ear grafted upon his head is recovering nicely. It is asserted that the new auricular organ will be sturdy enough to withstand the strain of listening to the statement of the amount of the doctor's fee.

A man who was caught in the act of committing burglary at Paterson, N. J., was ducked several times in clean water and then told to leave town. It is reported that the friction he created in the air as he left almost set his clothes on fire.

# Romance of the Year

Time Civil, Ecclesiastical and Astronomical—Date of New Year Variable—Equinoxes Alone Constant—Customs of New Year's Observance In Ancient and Modern Times.

At this time we celebrate the birth of the New Year and erect another milestone on the road of Time. How few think that 152 years ago the year at this season was old. How came the change? Not by the revolution of the earth, for that is practically unchangeable, but through the intervention of human enactment. Though time, as measured by the motions of the earth, may be taken as constant, yet its divisions into seconds, minutes, hours, days, weeks, months, years, eras, their beginnings and endings, are arbitrary products of the human mind, and therefore variable.

All nations and people have a particular epoch from which they date the era in which they may have lived. The Romans dated their chronological events from the founding of the city. The expression, "The year of Rome," or the letters A. U. C. (ab urbs condita) refers to that particular epoch. The Mohammedans express their sequence of time by "the year of the prophet." The date is from the Hejira, or the flight of Mohammed from Mecca (Hejira is pronounced Hej-ira, and is an Arabic word meaning flight), which occurred A. D. 622. The Jews reckon their dispensation from the creation of the world, but in reality their chronology begins with the Exodus. Moses intentionally introduced a new calendar, and makes Abib their first month. It has been supposed that the Jewish Sabbath is the same as the seventh day on which God ended His work, but as Moses changed the first month to Abib, he changed the first day also. The first day of this new year was the first day of the first month and the first day of the first week. The Sabbath being held on the seventh day, it must of necessity have been changed also. But being changed, it could not be in correspondence with the seventh day of creation on which God "rested." Christians date their epoch from the birth of Christ, the expression for which is the Latin words Anno Domini, or A. D., the initial letters of the words. Five centuries elapsed before an attempt was made to authoritatively fix the date of the Nativity. This was then undertaken by Dionysius Exiguus (little), who fixed our present chronology. It is now generally allowed that he was four years out in his reckoning, and that B. C. 4 is the correct year. This corresponds with the statement by Irenaeus and Tertullian that Christ was born about the year of Rome 751.

Different nations have begun their count of time at different parts of the twenty-four hours. The ancient Accadians, Babylonians, Syrians, Persians, the modern Greeks and the inhabitants of the Balearic isles reckon their day from sunrise to sunrise. Why the ancient nations began the day at sunrise is evident from their early religion, which was Magism. Fire was a chief object of reverence with them, and the sun as the grand symbol of their worship received especial veneration. Hence they began their day as they began their devotions—with the rising sun.

Others, like the Athenians, the Chinese and the Jews have counted the day from sunset to sunset. Why the Jews begin the day from sunset is potent from their religion. The characteristics of the Jewish religion are in sharp contrast to those of other nations. The aim of Moses was to wean them from the grossness of oriental religions. Hence the contrasts and antitheses. If the worshippers of the elements begin the day with sunrise, then the followers of Jehovah will begin theirs with sunset. Moses can have no concord with error.

The Egyptians and pagan Roman priests began their day at midnight. Most European nations follow the same rule. Americans have also adopted the custom. Astronomers, however, begin the day at noon, when the sun is on the meridian.

The day, meaning thereby light, from sunrise to sunset, was in ancient times divided into twelve equal parts, called hours. A similar division was observed with the night. Thus it will be seen the hour was constantly changing in its duration. The hour of the day in winter, when the days were short, was much longer than in summer, and vice versa. The same, of course, was the case with the nights, also. So that only at the equinoxes were the two series of hours equal. This was most inconvenient and resulted in much confusion.

To Hipparchus, a Greek philosopher, who flourished about B. C. 150, must be given the credit of dividing the day from midnight to midnight into twenty-four hours, or two equal portions of twelve hours each. This system prevails generally at the present day. But astronomers count continuously for twenty-four hours.

The week, as all know, consists of seven days. Christians and Jews hold this division because God created the heaven and the earth (the solar system) and primordial forms of life in six days, and "rested" on the seventh. But it would seem that pagan nations selected seven days because of the seven planets known to them, after which they called the days. The sun and moon were included in the planets. They were:

Sun, Mercury, Venus, Moon, Mars, Jupiter, Saturn. We call three days of the week directly after the planets—Saturday (Saturn), Sunday (Sun), Monday (Moon), and four through the Saxon names for the others: Tuesday (Tuesco—Mars), Wednesday (Woden—Mercury), Thursday (Thor—Jupiter), and Friday (Friga—Venus).

The month, no doubt, originated from the phases of the moon. These, sharp and well-defined, are four in number: the new moon, first quarter, full moon and last quarter. Each of these phases occupies about seven days, so that from new full moon to new full moon, there is something more than twenty-nine days, which is called a synodical month, or lunation.

No nation up to the present time has devised a system of absolute accuracy in the measurement of the solar year. Some ancient nations, such as the Chaldeans, reckoned the year as 360 days. This is the principle of that most ancient astronomical term, the Zodiac. The Zodiac is a belt encircling the heavens on each side of the ecliptic, within which the planets known to the ancients always revolve. It extends eight degrees on each side of the ecliptic. It is divided into twelve equal parts, called signs of the Zodiac. It is a great circle, and is divided into 360 degrees, like all circles; hence 360 days in the Chaldean year.

The Egyptians counted 365 days in their year. As the year contains 365 1/4 days nearly, such systems could not fail to work great inconvenience, for the seasons would move round in a cycle from one time of the year to the other. Let me make this quite plain. Take the winter solstice, for instance, which happens on Dec. 21. At the end of four years the solstice would be not on Dec. 21, but on Dec. 22. The sun would be behind time. In order, therefore, that the seasons should occur at the same time in the civil year, it was necessary to take account of this fraction of a day.

Julius Caesar, the great Roman emperor, determined to rectify the error. He called the celebrated Egyptian astronomer, Sosigenes, to his aid. Sosigenes suggested the addition of a day every fourth year. This day was added to February, and is known to us as "Leap Year," but to the Romans as Bissextile (Bis, twice, sextus, sixth).

This corrected calendar became known as the Julian. But as it made the year consist of 365 days, 6 hours, it was in excess of the actual time by 1 minute 10.3 seconds. Small as was this fraction, it accumulated to about one day in every 134 years.

The calendar needed reform. Time, civil and ecclesiastical, required readjustment. But to urge the necessary change was dangerous, as the learned Friar Bacon found to his cost. For pointing out errors in the calendar he received as a reward for the advocacy of the truth a prison, where he remained ten years.

As often happens, ecclesiastical requirements minister to civil necessities. The immediate cause of the correction of the calendar was an error in the time of observing the Easter festival. The Council of Nice, in A. D. 325, decreed that Easter is the Sunday following the full moon, next after the Vernal equinox. Owing to disputes arising from this decree Pope Hilarius, in 463, ordered that the paschal moon should not be the actual full moon, but an ideal one, falling on the 14th day of the moon by the metonic cycle (so-called from Meton, a Greek philosopher, who discovered it. It consists of nineteen years, at the end of which the sun is in about the same position he was at the beginning).

In 1582 it was found that the real equinox fell ten days before the nominal one, and from the error in the Metonic cycle, Easter had got four days wrong. Then Pope Gregory XIII reformed the calendar, called after him the Gregorian calendar, by the aid of Clavius, a learned Jesuit. The equinox of 1582, which should have fallen on March 21, fell on March 11. Gregory cut the Gordian knot by decreeing that Oct. 5 of that year should be counted as Oct. 15.

To the question, What is time? We may give the answer, duration, as measured by the solar system. For everyday purposes and artificial divisions mechanical contrivances are necessary.

The first method of measuring time, as far as we know, was by means of the obelisk. The pyramids of Egypt very probably answered the same purpose. Josephus states that Moses erected, at Heliopolis, in Egypt, a pillar for such purposes. "The cloudy pillar" that accompanied the Israelites in their forty years' wanderings in the wilderness, and which was a "pillar of fire by night," most likely answered the same purpose. Pliny states that an obelisk, now on the Thames embankment in London, and known as "Cleopatra's Needle," was erected by Mesophres about B. C. 1700, likely for similar uses. We all know, I hope, the reference in the Bible to the sundial of Ahaz, about B. C. 740. According to St. Jerome, who revised the old Latin Bible into what is called the Vulgate Version of the Holy Scrip-

tures, it was a pillar erected near a flight of steps (translated degrees in the English Bible). Berosus was the first to construct a sundial proper, in B. C. 540—the first recorded in profane history.

But sundials are only useful when the sun shines; hence some other measures of time became a necessity. The Egyptians were successful in inventing such a contrivance. They called it the Clepsydra (cleps, to steal, and hudo, water), by which time was measured by a continuous flow of water at a uniform motion. The Clepsydra is first mentioned by Empedocles, who flourished in the fifth century before Christ. It was brought to a high degree of perfection by a philosopher of Alexandria, named Ctesibius, and continued down to the invention of clocks, probably in the fourteenth century. Watches followed in due course, till they have become an almost necessary requisite of everyday use.

Most people are under the impression that the rotation of the earth has never varied from one complete turn in twenty-four hours. But this is an error. The motions of both earth and moon have not been invariable. There was a time when the lunar month was twenty-nine days instead of twenty-seven, as it now is (Sir R. Ball: Time and Tide). The synodical month, therefore, was between thirty and thirty-one days. (A synodical month is the interval from one new moon to the next.) So that primitive man, reckoning the month as a synodical period, or lunation, may not have been so inaccurate as we in our superior wisdom imagine.

Going back from this epoch to the infancy of the moon, we come to a time when the day and month were of equal duration—about four hours each! Going forward to the old age of the earth, we come to an epoch when the day and month are again equal. But this time, instead of being four hours each, they will be 1,400 hours. Just think of it! One day lasting 1,400 hours! When the day will equal fifty-eight of our present days, what will be the length of the year? But we must not stop at a 1,400-hour day. Going still forward in the far-off future, we come to a time when the face of the earth will be always turned to the sun, as the moon's face is now turned to the earth, and as she will continue to be. Then there will be a perpetual day, for the sun shall never set, literally fulfilling the words of the prophet: "Thy sun shall no more go down, neither shall thy moon withdraw itself." (Is. lx:20.) The romance of time! How it fascinates!

The new year has been observed with festive rejoicings from remotest antiquity. Its celebration by religious, as well as secular observances, prevailed generally among the nations of antiquity. And Egyptians, Hindus, Chinese, Persians, Jews, Romans and Mohammedans, although differing widely as to the time from which they reckon the new year, all regard it with especial interest of a joyous kind.

In olden Roman times the new year, which began in March, was inaugurated by a festive procession, with the priests of Mars carrying the sacred shield before the people. The people wished each other good health and prosperity and exchanged presents.

The Chinese begin the year at the Vernal equinox, and make it one of the most splendid festivals. All classes mingle together, and unite in thanksgiving for mercies received and prayers for a genial season and good crop.

With the Hindus the first day of the new year is sacred to Ganessa, the god of wisdom, to whom kids and wild deer are sacrificed amid illuminations and rejoicings. Among the mountainous tribes a buffalo is sacrificed before vast multitudes of people.

In ancient Persia prisoners were liberated and offenders pardoned. The Persian new year much resembled the Sabbathatical year of the Jews.

The Sabaeans held a grand festival on the day the sun entered Arus, one of the signs of the Zodiac. Priests and people marched to the temples and sacrificed to the planetary gods.

In the British Isles the Druids began the year on March 10th, with the solemn ceremony of cutting the mistletoe from the sacred oak. On that day two white bulls were tied by the horns. When a Druid, clothed in white robes, mounted the tree and cut off the mistletoe, after which the sacrifices were offered.

The Mexicans on new year's day adorned their houses and temples and engaged in various religious ceremonies. On such occasion human sacrifice was offered to propitiate the gods.

In modern times it is also an occasion of social rejoicing and interchange of courtesies. In England, under old style, the year began on March 25. On the change of date to Jan. 1, great opposition was offered by the people generally. Many really believed they were being deprived of eleven years of their existence.

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## THE SUNDAY SCHOOL.

LESSON XIII, DEC. 27—REVIEW AND CHRISTMAS LESSON.

Read Psalm 103 and Matthew 2:1-12—The Kingdom of David—The Reign of Saul—A New Era in Israelitish History.

If preferred this lesson may be used on the 20th of December, and the lesson for that day transferred to the 27th.

This review can be made a very effective and interesting Christmas lesson. For the kingdom of David was the antitype of the kingdom of Christ. Jesus was the son of David, and continued his line and renewed his kingdom. The promises to David were completely fulfilled only in Jesus. The wise men from the East sought from afar the new-born King, as the queen of the South sought the kingdom of David as completed by David's son Solomon.

The preparation by Saul and his reign is comparable to the Jewish nation just before the time of Christ. Saul and his new era prepared the way for the splendid development under David. The Jews, by their dispersion, by their synagogue services, their careful preserving and teaching of the Scriptures, their subjection to the Romans, their rebuilding of the temple, were a part of the preparation for Christ.

Youth and Training.—David's youth and training was a foregleam of the earthly childhood of Jesus. David's early training was exactly the best for the work he was to do in life—in a country home, religious and intelligent, with sufficient temptation, but not overwhelming till he was fully grown, amid daily duties that developed him physically as well as mentally, amid the influences of nature, or music, of meditation. He had physical strength, beauty and attractiveness. He had natural abilities of a high order and great variety. He was business man, statesman, warrior, musician and poet. "There was," says Kitto, "a rare combination in him of all that was gentle, tender and mild, with the most exalted enthusiasm, the most noble aspirations, the most generous sentiments, the most manly deportment, the most heroic daring, and the most invincible prowess, joined to invariable consideration for others, open-heartedness, humbleness, and entire absence of all pretension." He had the conditions of power over men. "He had a wonderfully rich, lovable character. He moved many men with that irresistible fascination which only the greatest exercise." David learned many lessons in the court of Saul, and in his exile which fitted him for his kingly duties. He learned the character and needs of his people by living among them, suffering their trials, experiencing their grievances and privations and sorrows.

So Jesus became man and passed through childhood and youth in order that being "touched with the feeling of our infirmities," "in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin" he might be "able to succor them that are tempted" (Heb. 2:18; 4:15).

King of the Jews.—Jesus was the king of the Jews whom the Magi sought. He was the descendant of David and inheritor of the promises to David, and of the everlasting throne of David, and the world-wide kingdom which grew out of David's kingdom. All the riches and splendors of David's kingdom as developed by Solomon were poor and dim beside the blessings of the kingdom of Jesus, spiritual riches beyond measure, comforts, joys, peace, education, character, love, and all outward blessings that flow from them.

The Seekers.—As the queen of Sheba came from afar to hear the wisdom and see the glories of the kingdom of the Jews, the story of which had reached her ears, so the wise men from the East came to find the new-born king at Bethlehem.

The queen had a large kingdom, gold and spices, but there was something more she wanted. The wise men had wisdom and knowledge, but they had heard of diviner wisdom and higher knowledge for which their souls longed.

The Finding.—Both found the object of their search, and to both "not half had been told."

Royal Gifts.—The queen brought royal gifts to Solomon, and the wise men brought gifts to the infant Jesus—"myrrh to a mortal, gold to a king, frankincense to God." And both received more than they gave.

Possibilities.—There was no limit to the blessings which David's kingdom might inherit for itself and for the world, if only the rulers and the people would be filled with the right spirit, obey God from their hearts and keep all his commandments. Where they failed the failure was due to refusing the necessary conditions. The development was slow, there were many failures and some disasters, but there was a gradual progress and a new movement and assured success through great David's greater Son.

In something the same way and for the same reasons the kingdom of Christ has not yet realized its possibilities, but the progress is becoming more rapid, and soon:

"Jesus shall reign where'er the sun, Doth his successful journeys run."

God's Ever Watchful Love.—The child thinks of its mother with perfect confidence that it has a place of refuge in times of need; but the mother thinks of her child with careful and unselfish love and keeps continual guard. Such is our childish thought, that often only turns to God in times of need; and such is the pure love of God that keeps continual watch to bring us strength and joy.

Milk Always Fresh. An invention which is described as about to revolutionize the milk trade is being worked in France. The milk is not "condensed" in the ordinary sense, but the water is extracted from it by a patent process. The powder that remains contains all the essential elements, and is converted back to milk by the simple addition of seven parts of water to one of the milk extract. It is claimed that it is always possible to have fresh milk by this process, which is the invention of Dr. Just, of Boston, and a German engineer.

Her Point of View. The aged cobbler had lived with his wife for many years in a three-room cottage on the edge of the town. When he died the kindly neighbors helped with the last sad offices, and the old man was laid out on the bed, with two candles burning at the head. The bereaved widow was cared for at a neighboring house. Next morning she went to her home, and, observing that the rats had eaten most of the candles, exclaimed: "Well, there's one thing about it. If I ever cut out o' this mess, I'll keep a cat."

An admiral flies his flag at the main mast, a vice admiral at the fore, and a rear admiral at the mizzen.

The attar of roses is obtained from red roses, the chief centers of culture being Bulgaria and Roumania.

A Western Woolgrower.

Newcastle, Wyo., Dec. 21.—There is a man in this place who claims that no one need suffer with backache, as he has proven in his own case that it can be completely and permanently cured. His name is S. C. Holst, and he is a stock raiser and woolgrower.

"I was shearing sheep at the time the first pain came on," says Mr. Holst. "I was so bad for two years afterwards that I could hardly sit down, and when once down it was almost impossible for me to get up again."

"I tried all the medicine I could hear of and several doctors without help, not even for a moment. I used Dodd's Kidney Pills and they made a new man out of me. I felt as if there was new blood in my veins. I am as stout in the back as a mule and can lift and work as hard as I please without an ache or pain in any part of my body."

"It is now over a year since they cured me and I can say there is not a healthier man in Wyoming than I am, and before using Dodd's Kidney Pills there was not a more complete physical wreck in the whole country than I was."

All Energy From the Sun. All the energy of life is derived ultimately from the sun. A little of this comes indirectly through lightning, which, in passing through the air, forms ammonia and oxides of nitrogen. These, being carried by rain into the ground, are the constant source of nitrogen for vegetable, and, indirectly, for animal life. A much larger quantity of energy is well known to be taken direct from the sunshine by plants and used in their anabolic processes. This energy is appropriated by animals in their food, and whether in the vegetable or in the animals, it assists in many alternations of the system before it is completely dispersed.

Suppose You Are to Live 50 Years. The total cost of a business and shorthand course in Tyler College is about \$125.00. That is, you get the benefit of these courses fifty years for a total cost of \$125.00 or \$2.50 a year.

These courses increase the earning capacity of the average young person from \$300.00 to \$840.00 a year—which is a clear gain of \$540.00 a year.

In other words, \$2.50 a year invested in education brings a return of \$540.00 a year, or 21,600 per cent interest on the investment. Can you beat it?

You are placed in line of promotion, kept busy and in good company, and can soon be independent.

A practical education is no lottery. There are no blanks. No odds what's your vocation, it will be worth ten times its cost. It is as durable as life, as handy as human need. It is worth a sacrifice. Will you make it? Write for large illustrated catalogue free. Address Tyler College, Department B, Tyler, Texas.

Women don't think much of a doctor unless he has a dozen different shades of pills in stock.

When racked with Rheumatic pains, so walking is an effort and running an impossibility, just try Hunt's Lightning Oil. The result will please and astonish you. Price 25 and 50 cents.

Tie a man to a woman's apron strings and he will hang himself on them.

Quit Coughing. Why cough, when for 25c and this notice you get 25 doses of an absolutely guaranteed cough cure in tablet form, postpaid. DR. SKIRVIN CO., LA CROSSE, WIS. (W. N. U.)

Where there's much smoke there is likely to be a lot of soft coal.

Stops the Cough and Works Off the Cold. Laxative Bromo Quinine Tablets. Price 35c.

When a thing is worthless how can it be worth less.

Try One Package. If "Defiance Starch" does not please you, return it to your dealer. If it does you get one-third more for the same money. It will give you satisfaction, and will not stick to the iron.

Locked-out knitting girls of Dover, N. J., have organized a co-operative knitting mill company.

The hair dresser doesn't succeed by having a pull.